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**Questions relating to information**

# Questions relating to information

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report, prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 66/81 B, provides highlights of recent communications campaigns undertaken by the Department of Public Information on such key issues as the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the Millennium Development Goals, international peace and security, human rights, the question of Palestine and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The activities of the network of United Nations information centres, a key component of the Department's outreach in the field, are also reviewed. The report highlights the media-related services of the Department, including the progress made by its multimedia website and news centre, as well as press releases and meetings coverage. It also provides an update on the outreach services of the Department, including its work with the creative community, support for the activities of the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme, and relations with non-governmental organizations. A summary of the Department's partnerships with institutions of higher learning and research through the United Nations Academic Impact initiative is also highlighted.

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# I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 78 of its resolution 66/81 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-fourth session and to the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of all recommendations and requests contained in that resolution. Accordingly, the Secretary-General submitted three reports for consideration by the Committee at its thirty-fourth session, held from 23 April to 4 May 2012 (A/AC.198/2012/2, 3 and 4). The deliberations of the Committee with regard to those reports are reflected in the report of the Committee on its thirty-fourth session (A/67/21).

2. The present report updates the information provided to the Committee on Information at its thirty-fourth session and describes the activities undertaken by the Department of Public Information from February 2012 to July 2012 through its three subprogrammes: strategic communications services, news services, and outreach and knowledge services.

# II. Strategic communications services

## A. Thematic issues

### United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

3. During the reporting period, the media and public outreach campaign for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development was a top priority for the Department, which succeeded in mobilizing large-scale awareness and participation. As Chair of the inter-agency task force of the United Nations Communications Group on the Conference, the Department regularly convened over 30 United Nations partners to agree on a common communications strategy and messages and to plan joint promotional activities and products on the key issues before the Conference.

4. In the months leading up to the Conference, the Department issued a comprehensive media advisory and regular press releases were distributed to journalists around the world, as well as an online press kit in the six official languages and in Portuguese. Press briefings were organized for the media at Headquarters, including with the Secretary-General, and numerous regional and national media briefings were organized by United Nations information centres, including those in Australia, Brazil, the Congo, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Mexico and South Africa.

5. "The future we want", the tagline for the Conference that was proposed by the Department, gained wide acceptance as a positive and forward-looking message that was successful in conveying the relatively abstract concept of sustainable development to broad audiences. At the Conference, it was adopted as the title of the outcome document and quoted in statements by dozens of world leaders. The outreach campaign on "The future we want", which built content for the website (www.un.org/futurewewant), included a series of articles featured on its front page by distinguished personalities, and United Nations system partners contributed content on priority issues and key reports in their specialized fields. A number of

United Nations information centres used the occasion of World Environment Day on 5 June and the release by the United Nations Environment Programme of the Global Environment Outlook report, "Environment for the future we want", to generate further press and public interest in the Conference.

6. Highlights of other public information activities at the Conference included:

(a) Information and technical services to facilitate the work of more than 4,000 accredited journalists from 93 countries;

(b) More than 100 press briefings for media at the Riocentro Convention Centre from 13 to 22 June, including a daily briefing by the Conference spokesperson;

(c) More than 40 media interviews set up by the spokesperson's team during the 10-day period with senior United Nations officials and representatives of business and civil society;

(d) A special wrap-up press event organized to summarize the voluntary commitments that had been announced.

7. Media coverage of the Conference generated more than 160,000 news articles globally from 1 January to mid-July 2012. The volume of news coverage steadily increased from 6,763 articles in January to 17,567 in May and showed a sharp increase by reaching 104,220 in June when the Conference took place. An op-ed by the Secretary-General entitled "A global movement for change" was placed by United Nations information centres in more than 60 newspapers in over 40 countries, reaching audiences in nearly 20 languages.

8. On all United Nations social media platforms, there was a major spike in the number of followers and their levels of online participation, owing to posts related to the Conference and the campaign for "The future we want". The Department worked closely with the secretariat of the Conference in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to promote the Conference and its related campaign, reaching over 1 million people in Portuguese on Facebook and achieving over 1 billion impressions in all languages on Twitter for the #Rioplus20 hashtag. More than 50 million people participated in the global online "conversation" around the theme of "The future we want".

9. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development was also promoted by the network of United Nations information centres:

(a) Ankara provided support to a bicycle tour with a message to world leaders on "The future we want";

(b) Beirut undertook a week-long campaign on MTV dubbed "Change your habits, save your energy";

(c) The Regional Information Centre in Brussels carried out a Europe-wide contest called "The future we want: drop by drop" to create an advertisement that inspires people to preserve water. For the campaign, it partnered with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The project was supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Roca We Are Water Foundation, the communications research centre Fabrica and the Government of Portugal;

(d) The centre in Canberra partnered with the University of Canberra to include the campaign for the Conference as part of a degree course for advertising and marketing students;

(e) Dhaka organized a half-day workshop on the role of youth in the Conference;

(f) Jakarta interviewed civil society representatives for a United Nations Television news magazine programme on youth and sustainable development in Indonesia;

(g) La Paz coordinated a virtual forum with about 5,000 young people, resulting in some 200 proposals for inclusion in national youth inputs to the Conference;

(h) Manila organized a nationwide essay contest on "The future we want", with top essays selected through an online poll on Facebook;

(i) Nairobi conducted a week-long model conference focusing on sustainable development;

(j) Ouagadougou assisted in the production of a 45-minute television programme on expectations for the Conference;

(k) Rio de Janeiro promoted a Portuguese website for "The future we want" through a massive national media campaign with financial support from the National Organizing Committee of the Brazilian Government. It featured advertisements for television, radio, online and print media, many of which were donated as a public service, and the city subway system exhibited large campaign posters in several stations and trains. Several United Nations Goodwill Ambassadors and Messengers of Peace participated, including Gisele Bündchen, Ronaldo, Paulo Coelho, the Brazilian rapper MV Bill and the architect Oscar Niemeyer. The social media component of the information centre's national campaign had significant impact. There was an intense amount of interest on Facebook in Brazil, with the Portuguese "Rio+20" Facebook page recording over 1 million impressions;

(l) The United Nations Office in Tbilisi co-produced a radio programme which was aired and streamed online.

**Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015**

10. For the report on the Millennium Development Goals for 2012, launched by the Secretary-General on 2 July at the opening of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council, the Department of Public Information prepared press materials and organized a background media briefing in New York, covered by several international wire services. The information centre in New Delhi organized a launch attended by more than 50 journalists, generating over a dozen media reports, including a front-page story in *The Times of India*. Launches were also organized by information centres and United Nations system partners in Nigeria, South Africa and the Nordic countries.

11. The Millennium Development Goals web portal (www.un.org/millenniumgoals) was regularly updated with short news items on a range of related issues. Social media accounts for the "We can end poverty" campaign on the Millennium

Development Goals continued to grow in popularity, with more than 42,000 followers on Twitter and over 24,000 "likes" on Facebook.

12. The Department also promoted the process of elaborating a development agenda beyond 2015, working with substantive offices to develop messaging and creating a new "Beyond 2015" web page with an interactive timeline, which was featured on social media platforms and will be expanded in the period ahead. For the appointment of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons to advise the Secretary-General on the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015, the Department produced media materials and supported media outreach.

**Gender issues and International Women's Day**

13. The Department worked with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to promote International Women's Day on 8 March and the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which was held from 27 February to 9 March. Its social media platforms were used to promote International Women's Day and the session of the Commission and a dedicated website in the six official languages was developed by the Department around the theme "Empower rural women — end hunger and poverty". The Africa Section of the Department, in close collaboration with UN-Women, produced a special edition of the magazine *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau* on women's rights, both in print and online, which was released to coincide with the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and International Women's Day.

14. Working closely with OHCHR, the Department produced a booklet to mark 30 years of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The publication was disseminated at a special event to observe the anniversary held at Headquarters on the theme "Women's political participation and leadership — in pursuit of equality", and the Department publicized the fifty-second session of the Committee, held in New York in July. The Department also provided ongoing editorial support to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the gender section of the peacekeeping website.

15. United Nations information centres in all regions observed International Women's Day in a variety of ways:

(a) Ankara worked with partners to organize a panel discussion to mark the Day;

(b) Centres in Colombo, Dhaka, Harare, Jakarta, Panama City, Prague and Vienna conducted seminars on issues including leadership for women, empowering rural women to end hunger and poverty and on women and media ethics;

(c) Ouagadougou assisted in the production of a 30-minute national television programme on the role of women in peacekeeping;

(d) Tokyo wrote five stories on women affected by the earthquake and tsunami and promoted them on social media platforms.

**Global action against racism**

16. After the launch of the multilingual website entitled "Let's fight racism" in March, a social media campaign in all six official languages was led by the

Department in partnership with OHCHR. The campaign, held in the lead-up to the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March, was called "7 days & 7 ways to fight racism" and reached more than 3 million people on Twitter alone. Thousands of followers heeded the call to take a stand against racism by sharing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The campaign's multilingual electronic postcards were featured on the home page of the social media platform *Storify*, resulting in more than 2,000 online views.

**Nelson Mandela International Day**

17. The Department's campaign this year to honour Nelson Mandela's 67-year struggle for democracy, racial justice and reconciliation included extensive outreach across social media platforms, the distribution of postcards and posters in six languages, the screening of two short films during an informal meeting of the General Assembly and a volunteer activity at a New York City soup kitchen. The Department also organized performances by two South African graduate students from the University of Cape Town Opera School at the informal meeting of the General Assembly. Information centres in Accra, Antananarivo, Brussels, Bujumbura, Manama, Moscow, Pretoria, Tehran, Yaoundé and others organized outreach activities and events.

**Commemoration of the Rwanda genocide**

18. For the eighteenth annual commemoration of the Rwanda genocide, the Department, in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations, organized a ceremony at Headquarters on 11 April on the theme "Learning from history to shape a bright future", followed by the screening of a documentary film, *Sweet Dreams*, and a panel discussion on 12 April. United Nations information centres and services in Antananarivo, Bogota, Brazzaville, Brussels, Bujumbura, Dar-es-Salaam, Dhaka, Geneva, Kyiv, Lusaka, Mexico City, Nairobi, Pretoria, New Delhi, Tehran and Windhoek also organized commemorative events.

**The question of Palestine and the United Nations**

19. The 2012 International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East, organized by the Department, was held on 12 and 13 June in Geneva. The event, planned in cooperation with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland, brought together journalists, bloggers, activists, film-makers, academics, policymakers, diplomats and government officials from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Israel, the wider Middle East region, Europe and the United States of America, as well as senior United Nations officials. Panel discussions examined the prospects for peace in the approach to the twentieth anniversary of the Oslo Accords; how the Arab Spring has affected media coverage of the question of Palestine; the role of women's activism and the media in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and in the wider region; civil society in media and film in the Middle East; and youth activism in the Middle East — evolving attitudes towards and tools for social change and democracy. The event was promoted extensively across online platforms, including Tumblr and Twitter.

**United Nations peacekeeping**

20. The Department of Public Information, joined by the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations, Field Support and Political Affairs and some United Nations peace operations, held their ninth annual training workshop at the regional service centre at Entebbe, Uganda, from 23 to 27 April. The workshop focused on the public information aspects of starting up, transitioning or terminating United Nations peace operations; the use of digital media; human resource management; outreach to troop- and police-contributing countries; and successful media operations.

21. The Department collaborated with the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support to mark the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, which highlighted the theme "Peacekeeping is a global partnership". Events at Headquarters included a wreath-laying ceremony, the Dag Hammarskjöld medal ceremony for fallen peacekeepers and the awarding of United Nations medals to uniformed personnel serving at Headquarters. Information centres around the world marked the day in a variety of ways, including holding wreath-laying ceremonies in Addis Ababa, Brussels, Dar-es-Salaam, Geneva and Nairobi, as well as organizing multimedia exhibits and/or panel discussions in Accra, Beirut, Bujumbura, Manila, Moscow and Vienna.

22. In response to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Department developed a special focus page on its news centre portal to serve as a gateway for information on system-wide efforts to address the crisis. In addition, it created and hosted in six official languages a dedicated website for the United Nations Supervision Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Disarmament, rule of law and counter-terrorism**

23. Working in collaboration with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and other United Nations offices, the Department helped to develop and implement a communications strategy in support of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty held at Headquarters from 2 to 27 July. The Department promoted the third biennial review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which took place from 27 to 29 June, and the related seminar hosted by the President of the General Assembly entitled "Understanding and countering the appeal of terrorism", and also provided communications support in preparation for the scheduled high-level meeting of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly on the rule of law at the national and international levels on 24 September.

**New Partnership for Africa's Development**

24. Through its magazine *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau* and a redesigned and regularly updated website, the Department has continued to raise global awareness of and support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Thirty feature articles were published in 124 different English- or French-language media outlets in 35 countries between February and June. The Africa Section of the Department continued to increase its presence online to reach the growing African population with access to the Internet, as well as audiences in developed countries. It is also using social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter; as of July, a total of

23,569 people were followers of the *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau* Twitter accounts.

## B. United Nations information centres

### Campaign collaboration with local partners

25. United Nations information centres carried out a number of campaigns in collaboration with local partners:

(a) Beirut, under the slogan "Solid roots for a strong Lebanon", teamed up in May with two local partners, the Safadi Foundation and the Lebanese American University, to organize a tree-planting campaign in a remote mountainside village to mitigate severe environmental impacts on the soil, curb desertification and create green areas contributing to environmental sustainability. This activity constituted the third phase of a campaign launched in 2011 by the centre and the University for the International Year of Forests;

(b) Jakarta promoted the "Lend your leg" mine awareness campaign with the Institute of International Studies at the University of Gadjah Mada and the Jesuit Refugee Service, which included engaging fans on the centre's Facebook page;

(c) Panama City organized an advertising campaign against racism at bus stops nationwide;

(d) The United Nations office in Tbilisi hosted, with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the information campaign "Stop racism — take action", which targeted youth and was dedicated to the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;

(e) Windhoek joined the World Health Organization, the Government of Namibia and local NGOs in a campaign entitled "Seven days of activism against drug abuse and illicit trafficking" in June, which included a television talk show, radio talk shows and public events.

### New products and websites

26. United Nations information centres and offices have developed a range of new products and websites:

(a) Mexico City, jointly with the Institute of Interpreters and Translators, developed a multilingual glossary with 20 essential terms and definitions related to sustainable development in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, which was especially useful for journalists covering the debates at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The Institute compiled the information and translated the terminology with the guidance of the centre and the support of other United Nations agencies;

(b) In June, Tokyo published a brochure entitled "Learning from the 2011 earthquake and tsunami: 'good practices' from Japan towards a sustainable future", a product of a symposium held on 24 October 2011, organized jointly by United Nations agencies in Japan, including the information centre and Tohoku University;

(c) The United Nations office in Yerevan launched its new website in February, which includes user-friendly architecture and navigation that allows easy access to site-wide bilingual information.

**Travelling exhibitions**

27. A number of information centres have organized travelling exhibitions:

(a) In commemoration of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the centre in Ankara negotiated with the Ankara metropolitan municipality to host the United Nations travelling exhibition on the transatlantic slave trade in one of the city's main metro stations;

(b) La Paz translated into Spanish the entire contents of the travelling exhibition on the transatlantic slave trade and had it featured in one of the largest museums in La Paz;

(c) Manila produced a travelling exhibit at selected colleges and universities, as well as in local government offices, of the winning essays from a nationwide contest on the theme "The future we want", in support of the campaign for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

**World Press Freedom Day**

28. The network of information centres organized a variety of activities to mark World Press Freedom Day on 3 May:

(a) Moscow organized a political cartoon exhibition featuring works by leading Russian cartoonists;

(b) Ouagadougou organized a panel discussion in partnership with the National Association of Journalists of Burkina Faso;

(c) Windhoek participated in a commemorative ceremony at the Namibian chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa;

(d) The United Nations office in Tashkent joined the National Creative Union of Journalists of Uzbekistan, the World Bank and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in co-organizing the international contest for excellence in journalism *Oltin qalam* (Golden Pen) for the best coverage of United Nations priority issues;

(e) The United Nations office in Yerevan, the Press Club, Internews-Armenia and the Armenian Journalists Union jointly organized an annual award ceremony for the best Armenian journalist.

# III. News services

## A. United Nations website

29. Efforts continued to focus on revamping several key areas of the United Nations website (www.un.org) with updated content, improved navigation and

expanded use of common branding elements aimed at enhancing consistency and coherence of presentation.

30. The Department created an umbrella page to provide access to information on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which included information on the "PaperSmart" initiative aimed at promoting the reduction of paper consumption during the event and beyond.

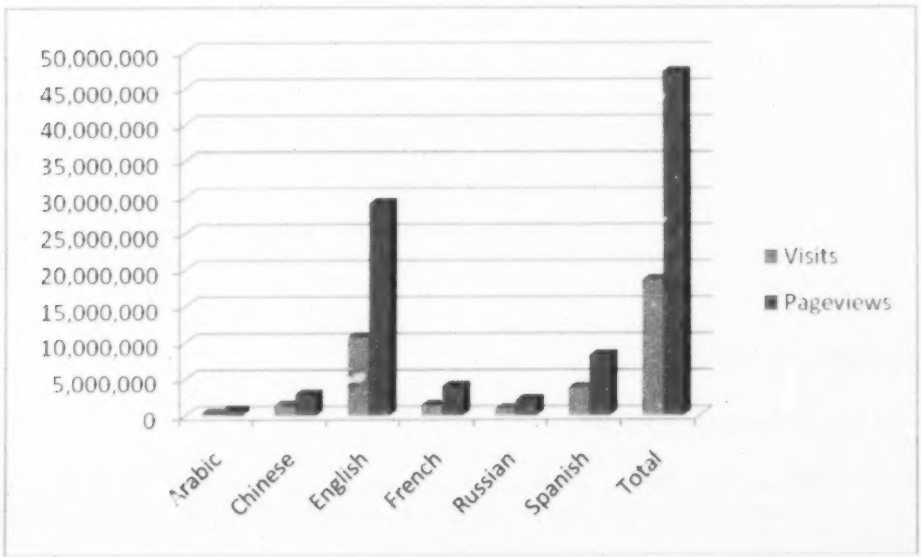
31. To capitalize on the opportunities presented by new media to inform the public about different facets of the work of the United Nations, in July 2012 the Department helped to organize the Secretary-General's conversation with youth through the United Nations channel on Sina Weibo, the most popular Chinese microblogging platform. More than 20 million viewers watched the live broadcast of the event, which has now reached a following of more than 2.2 million.

32. During the reporting period, the Department continued the process of revamping the websites for the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General and the Security Council with revised content, new imagery and improved intuitive navigation, in compliance with accessibility requirements. Special efforts were undertaken to improve content availability in all six official languages. This was the result of considerable work behind the scenes, including focus groups and user testing.

33. User experience analysis has been yielding pertinent information on usage trends through reports on website traffic, based on data collected through Google Analytics. This provides a more accurate analysis of usage trends by language, geographical region, specific sites and date ranges (see figure I and the table below).

Figure I

**Unique visits to and page views of the home page of the United Nations website, March-June 2012**



**Site visits from top 10 countries by language**

| *Country* | *Arabic* | *Chinese* | *English* | *French* | *Russian* | *Spanish* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | 14 467 | 30 719 | 3 527 324 | 64 753 | 20 551 | 83 052 |
| China | 2 120 | 1 243 934 | 185 273 | 5 623 | 3 423 | 3 111 |
| Mexico | 506 | 699 | 134 224 | 3 336 | 754 | 962 389 |
| France | 2 251 | 2 926 | 163 901 | 687 266 | 2 960 | 7 282 |
| United Kingdom | 3 607 | 5 795 | 765 708 | 13 323 | 2 499 | 6 032 |
| Canada | 1 590 | 4 243 | 556 706 | 142 364 | 1 441 | 16 540 |
| Russian Federation | 787 | 1 240 | 77 892 | 3 475 | 559 367 | 1 564 |
| Spain | 1 051 | 1 060 | 117 381 | 9 855 | 1 67[illegible] | 469 360 |
| Argentina | 278 | 335 | 65 506 | 3 763 | 419 | 454 712 |
| Australia | 929 | 3 692 | 481 309 | 1 729 | 525 | 1 389 |

34. Most of the new web pages created by the Department ensure accessibility by persons with disabilities, with content in the six official languages, as mandated by the General Assembly. Efforts will continue to focus on ensuring that the United Nations website remains accessible to people with disabilities, including those with visual, hearing and motion impairments. The Department now routinely provides captioning in all the official languages for the daily video on the United Nations home page and has been striving to extend captioning to other videos produced by the Department, as well as providing automated captioning options.

## B. United Nations News Centre

35. The *UN News Centre* portal (www.un.org/news) has continued to provide seven-day coverage of news on priority issues across the United Nations system in all official languages. On the English and French sites alone, more than 2,600 stories and 14 in-depth "Newsmaker" interviews were posted during the reporting period, attracting some 3 million visits and 6 million page views, as measured by Google Analytics. To provide easy access to a wide range of related materials and sources on issues in the news, special focus pages were created, for example, on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and efforts to address concerns pertaining to the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army in Africa.

36. To ensure timely and comprehensive coverage of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, a staff writer from the *UN News Centre* attending the event produced short multimedia pieces and multiple daily news reports, including on the side events, and conducted nearly 40 original interviews with senior officials, experts and civil society participants. These materials were disseminated across the various media outlets of the Organization, including the *Rio+20 The future we want* website and United Nations Radio programmes in different languages. Through its Twitter account, *UN News Centre* also provided a steady stream of information related to the Conference to its followers, who in turn re-disseminated the stories for more than 5 million impressions.

37. Articles from the Russian-language version of the portal were cited on or appeared in an array of major outlets in the region, from INTERFAX and *Lenta.ru*

in the Russian Federation to UkrInform in Ukraine, the BELTA press agency in Belarus, Asia-Plus Radio in Tajikistan and Inform-West in Kazakhstan.

38. Websites carrying *UN News Centre* stories included *The Guardian* (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Petra news agency (Jordan), Syrian Arab News Agency, Ma'an news agency (Occupied Palestinian Territory), *Bloomberg Businessweek* (United States), *Islands Business* (Fiji), the *Sofia Echo* (Bulgaria), *AllAfrica.com* and the *Scoop* website (New Zealand).

39. News and related content from the portal also featured prominently on the websites of United Nations funds and programmes, United Nations Associations, the network of United Nations information centres, civil society partners, educational institutions and a number of peacekeeping and political missions.

## C. Radio, television and photography services

40. The Radio Section accorded particular attention to the coverage of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which included a range of features and interviews that were produced in the six official languages as well as in Kiswahili and Portuguese. The related programmes in part highlighted the involvement of Kenyan women in sustainable development, the role of civil society in addressing sustainable development concerns in the Sudan and Morocco, hydro-energy resources in Tajikistan, mobile money in East Africa and the benefits of nuclear energy for development.

41. United Nations Radio provided close coverage of the efforts of the Organization during the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, producing content in eight languages, including the creation of a special page in Arabic which consisted of various features and interviews with the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria and senior United Nations officials. Among other topics, United Nations Radio highlighted activities related to International Women's Day and World Radio Day and produced a special programme on the visit to New York City in June 2012 by the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, when he visited a neighbourhood rehabilitation facility to witness first-hand how a drug prevention programme was changing lives. United Nations Radio also accompanied the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict on her visit to Colombia in May 2012 and produced a series of related programmes.

42. United Nations Television continued to provide essential services and programming which ranged from its staple feature series to live coverage of major meetings and conferences, including the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. To promote issues discussed at the Conference, 18 short video features were produced for distribution via social media platforms and the *UN Webcast* site, as well as Channel 150, the United Nations channel on the Time Warner cable network, which is available in parts of the New York metropolitan area.

43. The flagship monthly television news magazine series of United Nations Television, *21st Century*, which is now aired by more than 80 broadcasters worldwide, continued to expand its reach. During the period under review, United Nations Television began co-producing a French version of *21st Century*. Launched

in February 2012, this programme has since been aired globally on a monthly basis by TV5Monde. In collaboration with various United Nations bodies and offices, United Nations Television undertook filming missions to the Middle East, Pakistan, South Africa and West Africa to produce features on pertinent issues relating to the work of the Organization.

44. With the addition of the Arabic and Chinese versions during the reporting period, the *UN in Action* short-format television series is now available in all the official languages. In addition, *UN in Action* continues to expand the scope of its coverage through joint projects with United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, highlighting the work of the Organization relating to economic and social development, the environment, human rights and health.

45. United Nations Television also partnered with the Public Broadcasting Services network in the United States to co-produce a documentary on young opera singers from townships in South Africa. A partnership was also established with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea to produce a documentary on the history of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to commemorate its thirtieth anniversary. The video was screened at the Yeosu World Expo 2012 in the Republic of Korea. It was also uploaded onto the United Nations channel on YouTube and aired on Channel 150.

46. United Nations Television provided a curtain-raiser video for the Economic and Social Council, which was screened on 27 February 2012 in New York at an event entitled "Breaking new ground: partnerships for more and better jobs for young people". Another short video was created for the Council Youth Forum on the theme "Creating a sustainable future: empowering youth with better job opportunities", which was held on 4 May 2012. For the Council's annual ministerial review in July 2012, a public service announcement was produced for the opening of the meeting. For each event, a global conversation was facilitated on Facebook and Twitter, engaging youth and experts from around the globe.

47. United Nations Television continued to produce recordings of the Secretary-General's messages, including one to the Libyan people ahead of the country's elections in July 2012 in English and Arabic, which was widely disseminated by the media both locally and internationally. United Nations Television also produced a video message for World Autism Awareness Day.

48. *UN Webcast* continued to improve its services to its global audience. On 4 June 2012, it launched a redesigned website (http://webtv.un.org), which provided an enhanced user experience with live and on-demand video content, including higher video quality, improved performance and structure and tools for sharing videos through social media networks. In the period under review, *UN Webcast* made available a total of 6,048 video clips for on-demand access, including 659 videos of meetings and events during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in English and/or in the original language of the speaker. On the United Nations channel on YouTube, more than 2,250 videos have been made available, with new content updated daily. Special projects and playlists are created on the channel to raise awareness of important United Nations events and issues.

49. Demand for photography services continued to grow during the reporting period. United Nations Photo covered about 800 events at Headquarters in New York and the visits of the Secretary-General to more than 30 countries, resulting in

about 5,000 images published on the United Nations Photo website, and an additional 13,000 images added to the United Nations Photo Library.

50. Efforts to digitize historic photographs and make them available to the public have been continuing. Over 4,500 such images were processed and added to the website during the reporting period. Demands for such photographs include about 2,500 requests to the Photo Library from Member States, the media and the general public. Over 110,000 high-resolution photographs were distributed to clients through the Library or the Photo website. In addition, the United Nations Photo Twitter account and its Facebook page each gained close to 5,000 new followers and new "likes". Its Flickr page was viewed nearly 570,000 times and reached the milestone of 2 million accumulative views in early 2012.

## D. United Nations press releases and meetings coverage

51. Between 1 February and 15 July 2012, the Meetings Coverage Section produced 1,960 press releases, which totalled nearly 2,000 pages in English and French. More than a third of that output — 587 press releases — consisted of summaries of the meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies and specialized commissions. That coverage also included the thirteenth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. More than 955 press releases carried statements, remarks and messages from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, as well as material from other United Nations offices and departments.

52. The Media Liaison and Accreditation Unit processed 602 permanent accreditations and 1,363 temporary press accreditations in New York during the reporting period and more than 4,000 media applications for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The Unit provided information and logistical assistance for 310 media stakeouts and assisted with 157 press briefings and conferences attended by 2,974 media representatives. It facilitated access for 2,798 camera operators, photographers and documentary film-makers. The Unit also assisted with the media coverage of 91 bilateral meetings with the Secretary-General. In coordination with the Media Documents Centre, the Unit promoted a variety of events to the press by sending out more than 874 messages and electronically distributing 119 media alerts, 1,259 press releases and 2,546 other documents to more than 4,000 recipients, including the media, permanent missions and offices throughout the United Nations system. The Unit also conducted five group tours of the media facilities at Headquarters for visiting international journalists.

# IV. Outreach services

### Library services

53. Outreach to 368 major libraries located in over 135 countries — which also serve as United Nations depository libraries — continues to be a major focus of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. A new web page was launched to encourage these partner libraries to increase their own outreach and to provide them with a service of

alerts on the main events taking place at the United Nations. In May 2012, over 30 information professionals and document specialists from major research institutions in the New York metropolitan area participated in a seminar on United Nations information and documentation. In 2012, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library will lead a global review of United Nations library activities, with a view to increasing policy coherence and cooperation and harmonizing systems. This review will involve all relevant libraries located at Headquarters, other duty stations and regional commissions.

**The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme**

54. The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme partnered with Israel to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the trial of Nazi officer Adolf Eichmann with an exhibition on 19 April which was curated by Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, a panel discussion on 23 April featuring Elie Wiesel and a meeting with the Young Leadership Associates of the American Society for Yad Vashem, all of which were held at Headquarters. The Programme's 32-page study guide for high school students on the life and artwork of Petr Ginz, a Jewish boy from Prague who perished in the Holocaust at the age of 16, is now also available in Czech, French, Russian and Spanish.

55. The Programme continued to publish its series of discussion papers for university students in all United Nations official languages, including "Holocaust education in Russia today: its challenges and achievements"; "My journey as a child holocaust survivor"; "Holocaust by bullets"; and "The arrest of Ratko Mladić and its impact on international justice and prevention of genocide and other international crimes".

**Creative community outreach initiative**

56. The Department continues its 22-year partnership with New York Festivals, handing out annual awards for film and television programming, public service announcements and radio programming. This year, the winning entries in the three categories highlighted gender equality, collaboration between Israelis and Palestinians and indigenous culture. The awards were presented between April and June.

57. Other activities include the following:

(a) As part of its partnership with the creative community, the Department worked with the producers of the reality television fashion design show, *Project Runway All Stars*, on the filming of an episode at the United Nations, which aired on a network in the United States in February. The episode was watched by approximately 2 million viewers in the United States;

(b) Set against the backdrop of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the fourth annual *Envision* documentary film screening and discussion forum, held in April, focused on the challenge of building a sustainable global future with opportunity for all. The event, organized in cooperation with the Independent Filmmaker Project and the Ford Foundation, connected United Nations experts and NGO advocates with film-makers, with the goal of finding compelling ways to create momentum for social change;

(c) With the support of the United Nations Foundation and *Variety*, a leading trade magazine for the entertainment industry in the United States, the Department organized a luncheon in Los Angeles with more than 100 representatives of the Hollywood film industry. The event provided an opportunity to highlight the work of the Organization, as well as the role of its creative community outreach initiative, to a broad range of professionals from the industry;

(d) In May, the climactic scenes of a Japanese feature film were shot in the General Assembly Hall, highlighting the role of the United Nations as the forum where the representatives of every nation come together to address global issues.

**Celebrity advocacy**

58. On 30 April, Michael Douglas, who is a Messenger of Peace, co-hosted the International Jazz Day concert in the General Assembly Hall in New York, alongside the Director General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, the Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, Susan E. Rice, and Goodwill Ambassador for UNESCO, Herbie Hancock. The all-star event featured performances by world-renowned musicians, including Messenger of Peace Stevie Wonder, Goodwill Ambassador for FAO, Dee Dee Bridgewater and Goodwill Ambassadors for UNICEF, Angelique Kidjo and Lang Lang. The event received widespread media coverage, including an article in *The New York Times*.

**Education outreach**

59. As part of the commemoration of the fifth annual International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, a wide range of activities were carried out under the theme "Honouring the heroes, resisters and survivors", including:

(a) An NGO briefing that featured panellists from Africa, North America and the Caribbean;

(b) Special radio features on the transatlantic slave trade produced by United Nations Radio in English, French, Kiswahili, Portuguese and Spanish, with interviews also conducted in Fanti;

(c) A special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly;

(d) An exhibition which included images of heroes and activists, original documents, historical illustrated newspapers and artefacts from a private nineteenth-century collection;

(e) An evening celebrating the cultural and culinary specialities of Africa, the Caribbean and the Americas, which featured a culinary expert who explained the historical similarities between the foods and culinary practices of African countries from which enslaved Africans came and the countries to which they were brought;

(f) A film screening of the documentary *Slavery by Another Name: the Re-Enslavement of Black People in America from the Civil War to World War II*, which chronicles the ways in which African Americans were coerced into forced labour in the reconstructionist South following the Civil War and into the twentieth century;

(g) A global videoconference which brought together secondary school students from Bermuda, the Dominican Republic, Gambia, Ghana and the United States and linked the history of the transatlantic slave trade to present-day societies affected by this history;

(h) A special concert in the General Assembly Hall which featured reggae, jazz, hip-hop, percussion and other musical styles with African roots and highlighted the stories of heroes, resisters and survivors of the transatlantic slave trade. The concert also helped to raise awareness of and encourage support for the initiative to erect a permanent memorial at the United Nations in honour of the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

**Model United Nations workshop**

60. As part of continuing support for model United Nations programmes, which engage hundreds of thousands of students around the world each year, a workshop is being organized in August 2012 for university students and their teachers who manage these educational simulations of the Organization. The aim of this workshop is to deepen understanding of the way in which the General Assembly operates so that these simulations more accurately reflect the process by which resolutions are drafted and adopted at the United Nations.

**Commemoration of the International Day of Peace**

61. Launching the observance of the International Day of Peace on 21 September, the Secretary-General provided a 100-day countdown message on 13 June. The theme for this year, "Sustainable peace for a sustainable future", includes a focus on the role which natural resources play in financing or fuelling conflict and what is being done by peacekeeping missions around the world to address natural resources as part of efforts to maintain and build peace. It builds on the discussions which took place at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and on the key findings published in *Greening the Blue Helmets*, the recent report on the environment, natural resources and United Nations peacekeeping operations, published by UNEP. A poster and postcard have been produced in all official languages.

**Publications and editorial**

62. The most recent edition of *Basic Facts about the United Nations* was published in February in French and in July in Spanish under commercial co-publishing arrangements, while a Japanese version was published in June by Kwansei Gakuin University, a member of the United Nations academic impact programme. The first three chapters of the book were also made available online in Hungarian.

63. The sixty-second edition of the *Yearbook of the United Nations* for 2008, the reference work on the annual activities of the Organization, was sent for printing in May.

64. A special double issue of the *UN Chronicle*, published and distributed in May, focused on the history, purpose and issues of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The *UN Chronicle* was also made available in May online

and as an iPhone and iPad application in keeping with the PaperSmart initiative, in time for the Conference.

65. In March, the network of information centres were invited to provide feedback on the *Yearbook of the United Nations*, *UN Chronicle*, *Basic Facts about the United Nations* and the 2012 educational calendar, *The United Nations Making a Difference*. All of these publications were rated as highly satisfactory by the information centres, with 92 per cent especially valuing the accuracy of their information. The survey also documented a strong demand from the information centres for these publications in print, even for those which were readily accessible online, and an endorsement of the relevance of these products for their public information work, including regular use by United Nations staff and visitors and in outreach to civil society, educational establishments and Government.

66. The Department continued to develop its e-publishing programme while maintaining a strong physical book offering. During the period under review, 186 physical books and 261 e-books were published. Five new mobile applications were launched: the *United Nations News Reader*, *United Nations CountryStats*, *Basic Facts about the United Nations*, *Score the Goals* and *UN Chronicle*, with *United Nations CountryStats* alone exceeding 25,000 downloads. *Basic Facts about the United Nations* was published under licence in several languages, including French, Italian, Japanese, Korean and Spanish. Additional contracts for electronic licensing, translation, and reprints in 2011 and the first half of 2012 resulted in editions in 12 different languages and generated approximately 140,000 additional printed copies at zero or negligible cost to the Organization. Development Business launched a new version of its website in April 2012, which features enhanced search capabilities, special sections on the latest events, news and highlights and customizable e-mail notifications. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the first ever pop-up United Nations bookshop was organized and stocked with publications and branded merchandise, selling over 24,000 items.

**NGO relations**

67. As part of improving its global outreach efforts to civil society, the Department redesigned its website to make it more user-friendly and responsive.

68. During the reporting period, the section dealing with NGO relations organized 14 briefings, a communications workshop and a two-day annual orientation programme for newly associated NGO representatives.

69. For the first time, a one-day orientation programme for NGO youth representatives also took place, on 20 April. It was designed to familiarize these new representatives with the numerous services available to them as partners with the United Nations in general and the Department in particular. It also provided an opportunity for learning, sharing and networking with other NGO youth representatives.

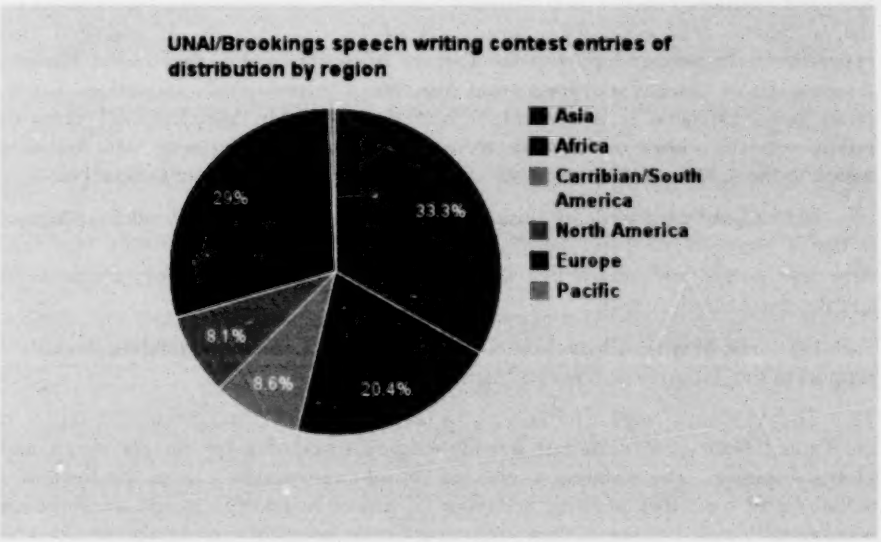
70. Efforts to find a Member State to host the sixty-fifth annual United Nations Department of Public Information NGO conference continue. Several Member States have expressed interest; however, a formal commitment has yet to be received.

**United Nations Academic Impact**

71. The United Nations Academic Impact initiative, with its focus on education, intercultural dialogue and multilingualism, undertook a number of initiatives during the reporting period, including:

(a) A speechwriting contest. Working in association with the Brookings Institution in the United States, the United Nations Academic Impact initiative held a global contest, inviting university students to imagine a speech that would be made by the Secretary-General at the opening of the next session of the General Assembly. The contest aimed to encourage students and future leaders to demonstrate innovative thinking on the rights and responsibilities involved in solving global problems through collective efforts in a shared culture of intellectual social responsibility. A panel of judges reviewed entries received from over 60 countries worldwide (see figure II below) and selected three winners, who will travel to New York for a face-to-face meeting with the Secretary-General later in the year;

Figure II
**United Nations Academic Impact and Brookings Institution speechwriting contest: distribution of entries by region**




(b) International Day of Human Space Flight. On the occasion of the International Day of Human Space Flight on 12 April, the Academic Impact initiative arranged a commemorative event with astronauts from the Russian Federation and the United States, who addressed hundreds of students and others gathered at Headquarters in Russian and English, respectively. From their space station in orbit, members of the International Space Station also sent messages in both languages. Students in Moscow and other locations, who watched the discussion online, were able to interact with the speakers;

(c) International Jazz Day. As part of its ongoing outreach initiative on "unlearning intolerance", the Academic Impact initiative organized a special event to celebrate the first International Jazz Day on 30 April 2012. Organized under the auspices of the Committee on Information and in association with the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, the event included a panel discussion, followed by the screening of a film on the universal story of jazz;

(d) Mandela International Day. Working under the overall slogan, *MANDELA: Marking A New Direction in Education, Learning and Achievement*, the Academic Impact initiative organized several activities in support of Mandela Day on 18 July;

(e) The Academic Impact initiative collaborated with non-profit youth groups in India, Young Changemakers and Raindance, to bring together students, young entrepreneurs, celebrities and members of the diplomatic community in a joint initiative to honour Mr. Mandela. In recognition of the 67 years that Mr. Mandela spent in public service, Young Changemakers and Raindance obtained financial contributions from 67 local donors to provide scholarship to 150 students of Shree Ganesh Vidya Mandir, a primary school in the Dharavi slum area of Mumbai;

(f) In New York, the Academic Impact initiative launched "7/18 for Mandela", building on the local calendar rendering of Mandela Day, which suggests the telephone area code of a large part of New York City. It arranged two programmes in partnership with the Queens Museum of Art, the United Nations Association of Queens and Immigrant Movement International, as well as artists, poets and musicians. In one event, in recognition of Mr. Mandela's 67 years of public service, audience members were invited to reflect on what Mr. Mandela meant to them. One of the events was conducted in English and one in Spanish;

(g) Continuing with its observance of Mandela Day, the Academic Impact initiative arranged the screening of a documentary film on 22 July about a Mexican-American singer and songwriter whose music became the voice of resistance in apartheid-era South Africa;

(h) The Mayor of New York City issued a proclamation extending the City's support to the initiative to observe Mandela Day.

72. The Academic Impact initiative also launched a lunchtime discussion forum at the United Nations to stimulate a wide-ranging discussion on current issues and global responses. The discussion, entitled "Point counterpoint", takes the form of a debate, with panellists arguing in favour of a motion or against and an audience opinion tally taken to see if these arguments have been able to change minds. The first such forum, on 11 July, was on the topic "Social media is antisocial", and was attended by delegates, representatives of civil society, students and teachers. With the help of a live webcast, the initiative was able to reach a much wider global audience, including many of its members.

# V. Conclusions

73. The continuing crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, the situation in the Sahel and acts of terrorism and insurgency the world over were among the issues on the global landscape during the reporting period. The response of the Department to

these events has been agile. It has seen its role as a vehicle for accurate facts and the reflection of world opinion, as well as an instrument to actively serve the larger goals of peace, human rights and humanitarian well-being. This was further evident in its continuing work on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals, on a future of accelerated and sustainable development for all (particularly in the context of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development) and on the ideal of solidarity of action based on the Charter of the United Nations.

74. The Department harnessed the power of new media and digital platforms while continuing to focus on traditional media, including print, radio and television. This approach has helped to broaden its range of information products, expand its outreach and open up communications links with new audiences, especially youth and educational institutions.

75. With the guidance and support of Member States, the Department continues to remain true to its governing resolution 13 (I) of 1946, in which the General Assembly stated that "the United Nations cannot achieve its purposes unless the peoples of the world are fully informed of its aims and activities". Moving forward and operating in a constantly evolving media climate, it needs to remain flexible and responsive. The Department will continue to carefully prioritize its activities to implement its mandate efficiently and effectively.